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Beard TV Interview Raises Health Query

United Press International

Senate investigators said yesterday that an ITT lobbyist's television interview raised serious questions about her doctors' contention that it might be six months before she would be physically able to testify before a congressional committee.

The lobbyist, Dita D. Beard, answered questions for 90 minutes for television personality Mike Wallace over the weekend.

She signed out of a Denver hospital, where she is undergoing treatment for heart trouble, for the CBS interview.

A week earlier, she suffered a heart seizure, according to her doctors, while testifying before a Senate Judiciary subcommittee. The doctors terminated the testimony and said she would not be questioned any more.

"Her television interview raises very serious questions about the consistency of the medical position," a lawyer on the Judiciary Committee payroll said.

The lawyer said he had not taken up the matter with committee members yet, "but they must be wondering what's going on. The questioning by Wallace was at least as persistent as that of the senators."

Sen. Philip A. Hart (D-Mich.), chairman of the special subcommittee that journeyed to Denver to interrogate Mrs. Beard, was not reachable for comment. But an aide to Sen. John V. Tunney (D-Calif.) said she was certain Tunney would raise questions about the interview when he returns to Washington today.

Columnist Jack Anderson published an inter-office memorandum he attributed to Mrs. Beard which linked an out-of-court settlement of an anti-trust suit against ITT with a contribution to the GOP National Convention.

Mrs. Beard has denied writing that part of the memo linking the two events, but has acknowledged that other parts of the memorandum were genuine.

The lobbyist is a key figure in the Judiciary Committee's investigation of ITT as part of its consideration of Richard G. Kleindienst's nomination as attorney general.

The committee will take up a Republican motion to cut off the hearings on Thursday. Tunney and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy were confident they could block the move. They were prepared to use committee rules—in effect a filibuster—to keep the inquiry going, if necessary.

Sen. James O. Eastland (D-Miss.), chairman of the committee, said, "They've got that right, if they want to use it."